

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in the present application. In an Office Action dated September 17, 2003, claims 1-5 and 7 are rejected on prior art grounds and claims 6 and 8 are objected to as being allowable if amended to include all of the subject matter of the respective independent claims and any intervening claims.

In reply, Applicant amends claim 1, cancels claim 6, adds new claims 9-15, and submits the present Remarks. The application is now in condition for allowance. Entry and consideration hereof are respectfully requested.

Applicant now specifically addresses, in turn, the Examiner's various rejections.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,025,277 to Chen. The Examiner essentially holds that the relied-upon reference teaches each and every limitation of the rejected claims.

As mentioned above, claim 6 is indicated in the Office Action as being allowable. Herein, claim 1 is amended to include all of the provisions of claim 6. Claim 6 is correspondingly canceled so as not to be duplicative. Accordingly, claim 1 is now allowable. That is, Chen fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the outstanding novelty rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4-5, and 7 all variously depend from allowable claim 1 and include all of the limitations thereof and additional limitations. Accordingly, claims 2, 4-5, and 7 are correspondingly allowable; withdrawal of the respective novelty rejections is requested.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the Chen patent listed above. Claim 3, however, depends directly from allowable claim 1. Accordingly, claim 3 is correspondingly allowable. Withdrawal of the outstanding obviousness rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 9-15 are herein newly added. Claim 9 includes all of the limitations of original claims 1 and 8. In the Office Action, claim 8 is indicated as being allowable. Thus, claim 9 is correspondingly allowable as being a combination of allowable claim 8 and its independent claim 1. Claims 10-15 depend variously from allowable claim 9 and are thus allowable.

As mentioned, newly added claim 9 corresponds to original claims 1 and 8 and newly added claims 10-15 correspond to original claims 2-7. Thus, the newly added claims enter no new matter nor present new issues for further consideration.

For at least the reasons discussed herein, claims 1-5 and 7-15 are allowable to Applicant. The application is now in condition for allowance; withdrawal of all rejections and prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorneys at the below-indicated telephone number regarding this Reply or otherwise concerning the present application.

Applicants hereby petition for any necessary extension of time required for consideration and entry of the present Reply.

Please charge any required fees for this Reply, or otherwise concerning the present application, to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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